

REMARK

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application as amended. Claims 1, 2, 8-11, 14, 18, 20, and 21 have been amended; claims 19, and 22 have been cancelled. Therefore, claims 1-18, and 20-21 are now presented for examination.

U.S.C. §103(a) Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1-7 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Costa et al. (U.S. 5,887,067). In view of Kawamura et al. (U.S. 5,371,553). And further in view of Foster et al. (U.S. 5,588,105).

The Examiner rejected claims 8, 10-11, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Costa et al. (U.S. 5,887,067).

The Examiner rejected claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Costa et al. (U.S. 5,887,067). In view of Tokuhisa (U.S. 5,862,231).

The Examiner rejected claims 14-15 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Costa et al. (U.S. 5,887,067).

The Examiner rejected claims 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Costa et al. (U.S. 5,887,067).

The Examiner rejected claims 20-22 for the same reasons as claims 1, 10, and 19.

Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 1 is directed to a graphical user interface method within a player/recorder system having a plurality of audio processing modules each having a plurality of tracks and each connected to a computer system having a processor and a display. The method comprises, "generating a first display portion on the display by the processor, the first display portion including a plurality of control boxes each corresponding to and controlling one track of the plurality of audio processing modules, wherein the plurality of control boxes corresponding to the plurality of tracks of a first audio processing module of the plurality of audio processing modules may be collapsed into a single first audio processing module control box corresponding to and controlling simultaneously all of the plurality of tracks corresponding to the first audio processing module; and generating a second display portion on the display by the processor, the second display portion including a central control mechanism for substantially controlling all of the tracks of the plurality of audio processing modules."

The claimed invention contemplates a GUI that has two display portions. The first display portion has control boxes allowing control of individual tracks one at a time, or control boxes that control simultaneously all of the tracks associated with any chosen audio processing module. The second display portion allows substantial simultaneous control of all of the tracks associated with all of the audio processing modules.

Costa discloses an audio communications system for a life safety network. The system has an audio communication portion 10, which "may have a plurality

of ASUs 12, audio amplifier modules 14 and CPUs 18" (Col. 3, lines 57-58). The communications system is designed to route packets of information from an audio source to an audio destination: ". . .The CPU controls the transmission of the audio data along the audio line and includes means for selecting a particular channel of the plurality of audio channels for transmitting the audio data. The audio source is coupled to the audio line and places a digital audio packet on the particular channel that has been selected by the CPU. The audio amplifier is coupled to the audio line, receives a signal from the CPU that identifies the particular channel, and retrieves the audio packet from the particular channel of the plurality of audio channels. The audio device converts the audio packet to an audible sound." (Col. 2, lines 17-35)

The "ASU 12 generates eight multiplexed digital audio tones from either prerecorded messages which are stored in nonvolatile memory 92 or from live audio signal from a local telephone microphone 130, a remote microphone 132, a local telephone, or an auxiliary input." (Col. 7, lines 6-11) However, Costa fails to disclose how any of these audio tones or audio sources are controlled via a GUI. "The operation of these devices may be monitored by a panel of displays and switches 136," (Col. 7, lines 11-12) and, in reference to Figure 3, "The CPU 18 may also interact with a user by receiving instructions from the serial port 60 and sending information to a display via a display interface 64 and a printer via a printer port 66." Costa teaches displaying the information either on a display or outputting the information to a printed format. However, because Costa

provides for a CPU to direct information from an audio source to an audio destination in life safety systems, it is designed to act automatically and is not concerned with providing display methods that allows a user to control what is being recorded by the audio channels or sent to the audio amplifiers.

Consequently, Costa does not teach any of the claimed invention with respect to a first display portion or a second display portion that allows control of individual tracks, all of the tracks of a chosen audio processing module or control of all of the tracks associated with all of the audio processing modules simultaneously.

Kawamara also fails to teach the claimed invention. Kawamara teaches, "a monitor apparatus for an audio-visual system which includes a monitor unit, a plurality of audio-visual units, and audio-visual bus means for transmitting data signals including a command, a video signal and an audio signal between the monitor unit and the audio-visual units, which comprises display means for displaying thereon a first control window for selecting one of the audio-visual units, a second control window for designating an operation mode of the selected audio visual unit, . . ." (Col. 3, lines 52-61). Kawamara allows a user, in a first display portion, to select an audio-visual unit attached to the system and then, in a second display portion, to control the selected audio-visual unit. There is no teaching or suggestion of controlling multiple tracks simultaneously or of controlling all of the tracks of all of the audio processing modules simultaneously. By allowing the user to select a unit and then control the single unit, the user can through a selective and interactive process, control each

individually controllable aspect of the system "by means of the single pointing device while the screen of the monitor unit is watched." (Col. 4, lines 17-19)

Consequently, although Kawamara teaches a first display portion and a second display portion, there is no teaching or suggestion of, "generating a first display portion on the display by the processor, the first display portion including a plurality of control boxes each corresponding to and controlling one track of the plurality of audio processing modules, wherein the plurality of control boxes corresponding to the plurality of tracks of a first audio processing module of the plurality of audio processing modules may be collapsed into a single first audio processing module control box corresponding to and controlling simultaneously all of the plurality of tracks corresponding to the first audio processing module; and generating a second display portion on the display by the processor, the second display portion including a central control mechanism for substantially controlling all of the tracks of the plurality of audio processing modules."

The Office Action then states it would have been obvious to modify Costa with the first and second display control means of Kawamara "for the purpose of allowing a recording expert to have varied ways of editing and/or enhancing the audio effects." However, the Office Action does not address why it would be beneficial or obvious to modify Costa from being an automatic life safety communications system that displays information related to its processes to a system that requires user interaction and interactive control. The Office Action states that it would allow a recording expert to have varied ways of editing

and/or enhancing the audio effects, but that is not a desired object of Costa or Kawamara. Costa is concerned with directing audio sounds from an audio source to an audio destination to give life safety warnings in a breakdown or emergency situation and Kawamara is concerned with allowing a user to control multiple audio-visual units, such as a camcorder, LDP, tuner, VTR through the user of a single pointer by individual audio-visual unit selection. There is no sufficient motivation to combine the two references as the Office Action suggests, and additionally, even if the two references are combined, the combination fails to teach the claimed invention.

Foster also fails to teach the claimed invention. The Office Action cites Foster for its pull-down menus and equates them to "collapsible" control boxes. However, Foster does not teach or suggest, "generating a first display portion on the display by the processor, the first display portion including a plurality of control boxes each corresponding to and controlling one track of the plurality of audio processing modules, wherein the plurality of control boxes corresponding to the plurality of tracks of a first audio processing module of the plurality of audio processing modules may be collapsed into a single first audio processing module control box corresponding to and controlling simultaneously all of the plurality of tracks corresponding to the first audio processing module; and generating a second display portion on the display by the processor, the second display portion including a central control mechanism for substantially controlling all of the tracks of the plurality of audio processing modules." As Foster fails to

address elements not addressed by either Costa or Kawamara other than the existence of a "control box" and pull-down menus, any combination of Costa, Kawamara and Foster fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention.

A similar argument is maintained with respect to each of the independent claims 8-10 and 20 as Costa, Kawamara and Foster together fail to disclose all of the claimed elements. Consequently, any combination of the references would also fail to disclose the claimed invention.

As the independent claims are not properly rejected in view of the prior art, any dependent claims are also allowable over the prior art for at least the arguments presented above. Consequently, the rejection with respect to dependent claims 2-7, 11-19 and 21 should be withdrawn and a favorable action on the merits requested.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections have been overcome by the Amendment and Remark, and that the claims as amended are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the rejections be withdrawn and the claims as amended be allowed.

Invitation for a Telephone Interview

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Request for an Extension of Time

The Applicant respectfully petitions for an extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) should one be necessary. Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 to cover the necessary fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a) for such an extension.

Charge our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: May 1, 2001



Mark J. Fink
Reg. No. 45, 270

12400 Wilshire Boulevard
7th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025-1026
(303) 740-1980

Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

1. (Thrice Amended) In a player/recorder system having a plurality of audio processing modules each having [one or more] a plurality of tracks and each connected to a computer system having a processor and a display, a graphical user interface method of centrally controlling [each of] the [one or more] tracks of the plurality of audio processing modules, the method comprising: generating a first display portion on the display by the processor, the first display portion including a plurality of [collapsible] control boxes each corresponding to and controlling one track of the plurality of audio processing modules, wherein the plurality of control boxes corresponding to the plurality of tracks of a first audio processing module of the plurality of audio processing modules may be collapsed into a single first audio processing module control box corresponding to and controlling simultaneously all of the plurality of tracks corresponding to the first audio processing module; and generating a second display portion on the display by the processor, the second display portion including a central control mechanism for substantially simultaneously controlling all of the tracks of the plurality of audio processing modules.
2. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 1 further including:
selecting one of the plurality of [collapsible] control boxes;

transmitting a control command associated with the selected [collapsible] control box from the computer system to an audio processing module having the corresponding track; and performing a function assigned to the control command by the audio processing module.

8. (Thrice Amended) In a player/recorder system having a plurality of audio processing modules each having [one or more] a plurality of input/output ("I/O") channels and each connected to a computer system having a processor and a display, a graphical user interface method of centrally controlling [each of the one or more] the plurality of I/O channels of the plurality of audio processing modules, the method comprising:

generating a first display portion, the first display portion including [one or more collapsible] a plurality of control boxes each controlling [to control] a corresponding [one or more] I/O [channels] channel of the plurality of audio processing modules, wherein the plurality of control boxes corresponding to the plurality of I/O channels of a first audio processing module of the plurality of audio processing modules may be collapsed into a single first audio processing module I/O control box corresponding to and controlling simultaneously all of the plurality of I/O channels corresponding to the first audio processing module;

displaying the first display portion by the processor on the display
for control by a user;
selecting a control command on a specified [collapsible] control box
by the user;
transmitting the control command from the computer system to the
audio processing module having the I/O channel corresponding to
the specified control box; and
performing a task assigned to the control command by the audio
processing module with respect to the I/O channel.

9. (Thrice Amended) In a player/recorder system having a plurality of
audio processing modules each having [one or more] a plurality of
input/output ("I/O") channels and each connected to a computer
system having a processor and a display, a graphical user interface
method of centrally controlling all of the [one or more] plurality of
I/O channels of the plurality of audio processing modules, the
method comprising:
generating a display portion, the display portion including a central
control mechanism to control all of the [one or more] plurality of
I/O channels of the plurality of audio processing modules;
displaying the display portion by the processor on the display for
control by a user;
selecting the central control mechanism;

transmitting a global control command associated with the central control mechanism from the computer system to the plurality of audio processing modules; and
in each audio processing module, causing all the I/O channels to perform a task assigned to the global control command.

10. (Thrice Amended) An apparatus for controlling a plurality of audio processing modules having [one or more tracks] a plurality of tracks in a player/recorder system[, each of the plurality of audio processing modules having one or more input/output ("I/O") channels], the apparatus comprising:
 - a processor; and
 - a display including
 - a first display portion produced by the processor, the first display portion including a plurality of [collapsible] control boxes each corresponding to and controlling one track, wherein the plurality of [collapsible] control boxes corresponding to the plurality of tracks of [an] a first audio processing module may be collapsed into a single control box corresponding to and controlling simultaneously all of the plurality of tracks corresponding to the first audio processing module, and
 - a second display portion produced by the processor, the second display portion including a central control mechanism to

substantially simultaneously control all of the plurality of tracks [one or more I/O channels] of the plurality of audio processing modules.

11. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising a selection device to select one of the [collapsible] control boxes corresponding to one of the [I/O channels] plurality of tracks of the plurality of audio processing modules.
14. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising an I/O device to transmit a control command associated with the one of the control boxes selected by the selection device to an audio processing module having [the one of the] a corresponding I/O channel of a plurality of I/O channels.
18. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein each of the plurality of audio processing modules receive [a] the global control command and perform a function assigned to the control command with respect to all of [the I/O channels] its corresponding plurality of I/O channels.
19. (Cancel)
20. (Amended) In a player/ recorder system having a plurality of embedded boxes (EBXs) each corresponding with a plurality of

tracks and each connected to a computer system having a processor and a display, a graphical user interface method of centrally controlling the plurality of tracks of the plurality of EBXs, the method comprising:

generating a first display portion on the display by the processor, the first display portion including one or more [collapsible] control boxes and one or more EBX control boxes, wherein the one or more [collapsible] control boxes correspond to and control a single track of the plurality of tracks and each EBX control box of the one or more EBX control boxes corresponds to and controls all of the plurality of tracks associated with its corresponding EBX of the plurality of EBXs; and

generating a second display portion on the display by the processor, the second display portion including a central control mechanism for simultaneously controlling all of the tracks.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein the [collapsible] control boxes corresponding to the plurality of tracks of a first EBX may be collapsed into the EBX control box that corresponds to and controls all of the plurality of tracks associated with the first EBX.
22. (Cancel)